From "Evolutionary Turn" to "Territorial Resources"

The New Trajectories of Innovation in Provence, France

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Abstract

This article provides a comparative insight of two theoretical frameworks: the "Evolutionary Turn" of Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) developed notably by Ron Boschma, Ron Martin and Peter Sunley, and the new works of the GREMI[1] group, developed notably by Roberto Camagni, Denis Maillat and Andrée Matteaccioli. EEG assets that the economic landscape is influenced by 'path dependence' and witnesses a strong capacity of evolution and adaptation. The GREMI, on the other hand, has recently been focusing on natural and cultural resources that are able to generate new forms of local development in the long term. These "territorial resources" are exploited by an innovative 'milieu' that plays a key role in coordinating this process. By studying the competitive cluster of perfumes, aromas, flavors and fragrances in Provence (France) that enables the exploration of these new trajectories of innovation, I will argue that these two approaches are complementary. After highlighting the main contributions of both theories, I will then present the historical framework of old industries like soap of Marseilles. Next, I will focus on the ideological turn that occurred in the 70's with the emergent notion of authenticity and the capacity of the local milieu to convert latent resources into active resources. The concluding section will emphasize the role played by regional actors in setting these new trajectories in motion, without underestimating the persistent or new deadlocks, and it will also draw lessons and perspectives from this research.

[1] **G**roupe de **R**echerche **E**uropéen sur les **M**ilieux **I**nnovateurs ; European Research Group on Innovative Milieus

Introduction

Over the last two decades, the development of Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) has generated a growing interest in questions of evolution and adaptation, particularly in northern Europe and the Anglophone world (Boschma, Frenken, 2006; Boschma, Martin, 2007; Essletzbichler, Rigby, 2007; Mackinnon, 2008; Martin, Sunley, 2006). Faced by the dynamics of globalization, economic geographers have remained attracted to regional diversity rather than to standardization processes. In addition to the success of this new trend, the geographic community has also portrayed its own diversity (Martin, Sunley, 2001; Grabher, 2009) and its affinities with the urban and regional economy. The GREMI, set up during the 1980's (Aydalot, 1986), as well as a series of researchers sharing similar concepts, published a range of new works (Camagni, Maillat, Matteaccioli, 2004; Gumuchian, Pecqueur, 2007; Leriche, Daviet, Sibertin, Zuliani, 2008) that represented another trend more representative of Latin Europe. Instead of focusing, as previously, on technologies such as sources of local development, they pioneered a major interest in territorial resources. The aim therefore is to investigate these two visions that have arisen from different 'styles of scientific reasoning' (Hacking, 2002), and to demonstrate how they can complement each other for regional analysis. This will be the subject of the first section before applying this theoretical framework to the case study in sections 2 and 3. This article is consequently based on a selected review of the literature and an empirical study. In this regard, the cluster of perfumes, aromas, flavors and fragrances in Provence is interesting because, with new companies such as *L'Occitane en Provence*, we can observe firstly, the new trajectories of innovation that are based on the aspirations of today's consumer, secondly, the symbols of a past industry like the soap of Marseilles, and thirdly, landscapes such as lavender, illustrating the colors and aromas that are so characteristic of Provence. Thus it is this original mixture between tradition and modernity, rupture and parentage that we will examine.

I 'Historical anchorage', 'innovative milieu' and 'territorial resources'

The aim of this first section is to argue that several convergent concepts and theories have emerged quasi simultaneously in the geographical analysis, although they have followed different paths in different countries. I will argue here that the contribution of the past, currently called 'path dependence' could also be termed 'historical anchorage', giving the idea of history being embedded within the present territory.

I.-1. *'Path dependence' has its own geography*

Hodgson (2001) showed 'how economics forgot history'. It is not surprising therefore, that after the end of economic certainty and under the critical influence of the 'Evolutionary Turn', regional space became contextualized and re-established inside its historical depth as its social dimension. Hence, the economic landscape continues to be shaped by practices, skills and technologies inherited from the past (Mackinnon, 2008; Walker; 2000). This "apparent" discovery, however, is rather disconcerting for a French geographer, whose basic training encompasses the interaction of history and geography - since geography became an academic discipline – rather than geography and economy. For instance, the work of Fernand Braudel (1902-1985) illustrates the interaction of scales and temporalities. By embodying the famous "Annales school", he explored the *longue durée* approach in contrast to 'a history of events'. The role of large scale socio-economic factors, notably through *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, was emphasized with `The Mediterranean` being the main focus in the book. Although French geographers incorporate historical dimensions in their research, this should be re-examined and theorized. Thus, EEG provides a substantial

contribution (Boschma and Martin, 2007; Martin and Sunley, 2007), with recently new concepts such as 'path creation' (Raghu Garud & Peter Karnøe, 2001) and 'path interdependence'-or co-evolution of paths-; and it is interesting to see different disciplinary paths shaped in different places through different histories. As mentioned by Barnes (1996), all knowledge-production is 'situated' and the best that we can do is to cross interpret.

I. -2 Evolutionary Turn and the concept of "milieu" have the same chronology

After the pioneering works of Veblen (1898), and despite some other major contributions from Schumpeter (1943), Mackinnon (2008) emphasized that evolutionary approaches became relatively marginalized over the course of the 20th century up until the rupture of the 1970s. This can be compared to the notion of districts, that were first explored by the founding work of Marshall (1890, 1919), then forgotten over the course of the 20th century until the crisis of Fordism, and finally rediscovered by Becattini (1979, 1992) who characterized them as: *"A socio-territorial entity characterized by the presence of an active community of people and a population of firms in an historical and geographic given space"*. This contribution from the Italian school emphasized not only the social and cultural dimension of districts but also their historical dimension. In fact, districts had probably never disappeared, but the dominant model of the big firm hid a more diverse reality, especially in Europe where empirical studies - which remained less well known - testify to the persistence of such business combinations (Benko, Abrantes, 2004; Daviet, 2005). During the same period, taking advantage of these paradigm shifts, the GREMI was created and evolutionary approaches experienced a revival.

For Aydalot (1986) and the GREMI, the key concept is the re-generation of local territories and their internal dynamics. The firm does not 'pre-exist' in a local environment, it is closeted by it. The interdependencies created within the territory, the prevailing consensus, information flows and synergies between local agents are all at the root of the innovative process. So, the local environment can be viewed as a sort of incubator for innovation. The debate between regional economists in many countries during the 1980`s and 90`s, finally brought attention to the importance of non-economic factors, and thus the need to (re) introduce cultural, social, religious and historical factors. Hence, Lacour (1996, p. 33), who was president of the ASRDLF[2], stated: "*The wish to explain the economic phenomena better requires the recognition that apparently non-economic factors play a major role, but perhaps not noisy, not detectable, not conceptualized in the classical sense. Cultural, political, and social factors too, become fully entitled 'acting factors', about which we can theorize directly, without leaving them at the door, unfit and unworthy to enter into the field of economic science.*"[3]

Taking history into account is therefore part of a wider debate where, over several years, the idea of embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985), the cultural dimension of regional space (Saxenian, 1994), and the concept of territory, have emerged (Sack, 1986; Di Méo, 1998; Daviet, 2005). More generally, different streams from 'Cultural Turn' (Barnes, 1996, 2001; Peet, 1997; Sayer, 1994; Thrift and Olds, 1996; Thrift, 2000) towards 'Historical Turn' (Liu, 2009; McDonald, 1996; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003; Pierson, 2004) have converged and contributed to the "deconstruction" of a dominant economic paradigm – a smooth space

[2] ASRDLF= Association de Science Régionale de Langue Française

[3] « L'ambition de mieux expliquer des phénomènes économiques impose la reconnaissance que des facteurs apparemment non économiques jouent un rôle essentiel, mais peut-être non bruyant, non repérable, non conceptualisé au sens classique. Le culturel, le politique, le social aussi, deviennent de plein droit des 'facteurs agissants' que l'on peut théoriser directement, sans les laisser à la porte, inaptes et indignes de rentrer dans le champ scientifique économique » (Lacour, 1996, p. 33).

without history neither culture – in favour of a more complex vision of space. Recently, authors representatives from both the GREMI and EEG participated to a book (Boschma, Kloosterman, Lambooy, 2005) criticizing and questioning the idealization of clusters, which, in the meantime and for non-scientific reasons, had become the dominant model (Martin and Sunley, 2003). This bears witness to a "trading zone" (Barnes, 2004) between countries, disciplines and points of view.

I. -3. Heritage resources and the memory of places

If there is a certain consensus to recognize the role of history, much remains to be said about how the past comes to us and how the memory of places functions. Besides a strong interest in practices, skills and technologies inherited from the past, other studies have focused on the product itself as a vector of communication (Baudrillard, 1968; Bourdieu, 1971 Geertz, 1973; Lash, Urry, 1994): the product refers back to the past and its signs, conveying a history and in some cases an imagery (Daviet, 2005, p. 80). Peet (1997, 2000), also pointed this concept of 'imagery'. Thus, heritage resources have become particularly exciting, and have been acknowledged as key inputs for economic development. Consequently, the GREMI has counterbalanced the prominent role given by EEG to technologies, opening up a new path for reflexion. Moreover, while evolutionary views focused on processes more than consequences (Witt, 2002; Liu, 2009), GREMI paid close attention to the consequences. Their respective contributions can therefore be regarded as complementary.

Actors of development usually enhance local resources, by transforming latent resources into active resources (Camagni, Maillat, Matteaccioli, 2004), and many examples attest to European inventiveness in transforming these cultural assets (Greffe, 2006). In most cases the

value of a place is based on heritage resources, whether they are natural or historical, and these 'given resources' can be changed into 'constructed resources', thanks to an awareness by well-organized actors (Kebir, Crevoisier, 2004). In other words, as pointed by Pecqueur (2005), territorial resources have to be 'revealed', before becoming marketable assets. In fact, the three terms: 'given', 'revealed' and 'constructed' can represent three main stages that will be developed in sections 2 and 3.

These resources are, by definition, embedded in the physical heritage of a place (Gravari-Barbas, Violier, 2003), forcing most consumers to travel to experience them. Many cities, such as Florence, Amsterdam, Prague… have, for historical reasons, inherited such resources. Museums are an expression of these immobile assets (Scott, Leriche, 2005), and the patrimonial nature, marked by the preservation, recovery and transmissibility of a legacy resource is also omnipresent in this case. Because of its history, urban and rural Europe is ingrained by this heritage of great diversity, which now also includes industrial heritage. Deshaies (2008) highlights the pioneering roles of Germany, the UK and Sweden in highlighting the value of mining heritage; and each of these countries already has one or two UNESCO World Heritage Sites. However, it is important to note that the value of natural and cultural resources can also relate to mobile products such as argan oil from Morocco or vintage wine from Bordeaux.

This leads us to underlining the importance of labelling for both static products, such as a site classified by UNESCO, and mobile products, such as wine. The label is a distinctive sign assigned to a product closely associated with a territory (Santagata, 2002), establishing a "brand" from this area. It appears as a means of identifying and distinguishing a product, thereby emphasizing its cultural originality. The labelling strategy is often able to create a

dynamic, as exemplified the added value got by a product 'Controlled Origin' (AOC, Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée) or the restoration of a village (eg "The Most Beautiful Village of France"). These are undoubtedly factors of renewal and attractiveness, generating such dynamics (Daviet, Leriche, 2008).

II Once upon a time the soap of Marseilles…a tale of old industries

The aim of this second section is to study a given resource buried in the past (here, the soap of Marseilles) and examine how it is revealed and hence, re-updated. However, before exploring the construction stage, it is necessary to deal with perception and representation.

II-1 The history of historians: rise and fall of an old industry, a resource buried in the past

Soap production in Marseilles was a very old industry, and was linked, at its creation, to the well-established textile industry, focusing more on washing fabrics than personal hygiene (Daumalin, Girard, Raveux, 2003). Its composition was notably made of olive oil that naturally contains more stearic acid solids at room temperature than other vegetable fats. The Edict of 1688 required that only pure olive oil was to be used, and this was imported into Marseilles from throughout the Mediterranean. At the end of the 18th century, the soap industry was the dominant industrial activity in the city with thirty factories, it had acquired a quasi monopoly in France, and was exported to many countries.

During the 19th century, due to the scarcity and high cost of olive oil, other vegetable oils such as palm and groundnut oil were used more frequently, enabling the United Kingdom to become a serious competitor. Hence, in order to compete, entrepreneurs from Marseilles

began producing soaps from a mix of olive oil and other oils, such as groundnut oil from Senegal. At the outbreak of World War I, the Marseilles small industrial soap units were heavily lacking investment, and were increasingly challenged by the British companies. They could not compete against companies like the *Lever* grou*p,* which had its own plantations, shipping companies, production of sodium carbonate, and exported worldwide. Unfortunately, the efforts undertaken in Marseilles to modernize the production plants between WWI and WWII were inadequate (Lambert, 1995). In the 1950s, washing powder and chemical detergents permanently displaced the old soap of Marseilles that had never really been adapted for washing machine usage, except by some firms such as *Persil* which had been bought in 1921 by *Lever.*

The collapse of this industry, coupled with the end of other traditional industries, soon symbolized the industrial decline of Marseilles, which had built its reputation on non-leading industrial sectors (Chastagnaret, 1997). Although, throughout the 20th century, other research had uncovered the development of new sectors, the soap history has remained a symbol, an emblematic image for the history of the city. A legend had been born. Nowadays, while the so-called 'soap of Marseilles' is not protected by any trademark stating its place of manufacture, several new producers are using its name and image more or less legitimately.

II-2 The soap of Marseilles' imagery: a revealed resource

The end of Fordism did not only embody a transformation of the 'mode of production', but the 'mode of consumption' was also deeply contested. The idea of returning to the land has cut a path to the younger generation, and this context probably inspired Olivier Baussan, a

French entrepreneur and founder of *L'Occitane en Provence* - a renowned company manufacturing and selling soaps and toiletries throughout the world-.

In the 1970s, when Baussan first began his hand-crafted production, he recovered an old alembic for essential oils, and old moulds used for shaping the soap of Marseilles. In contrast to the cutting-edge technology that Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, the founders of *Apple*, were working with, Baussan, a literature graduate from the University of Provence, had very different ideas. He was looking for tools and technologies that were completely obsolete, abandoned, which had belonged to the history of the Marseilles industry and the Provencal countryside. His method seems the antithesis of his time, when searching for new technologies symbolized the "creative destruction" dear to Schumpeter. Yet, he had the vision of what many consumers are trying to find today, namely: the authenticity of a time when products were more "natural". As stated by Claval (1995, p. 83-84), *"The innovator is often the interpreter of society"*. What is unique in this return to the past is that the wall of irreversibility has been broken, while the historical model is supposed to be a 'one-way traffic' (Robinson, 1962).

Sales were successful insofar as Baussan, the designer, managed to communicate to the consumers this "Search of Lost Time", as in the work of Marcel Proust (1871–1922). Indeed, this literary merit was to reveal in part the operation of the involuntary memory, which works by flash. It is triggered by sensory experiences such as sights, sounds and smells. It proceeds from 'the world of experience' observed in the humanistic approach. Fremont (1976) showed a great interest in France for this concept of 'life space'. In addition to the objective inventory of the discipline, this approach focused on individual or collective subjects, and how, through the perception of their senses – what they saw, smelt, tasted… – a specific relation is

established with a specific place. In the same vein, Buttimer (1976) in England brought attention to the concept of 'lifeworld'.

Soaps, fragrances and other skincare products, produced by *L'Occitane en Provence*, can be more or less considered as 'products of the soil'. The company commitment to preserving: *"the know-how and key actions which tend to disappear, to see them back through the creation of real products such as the famous soap of Marseilles"*... can be seen on its website. The soap itself, its form, colour, smell, packaging, faithfulness to the materials and to styles of yesteryears conveys the imagery of Provence. The stores, with their typical Provençal scenes, their floor tiles made of terracotta and old displays, reconstruct a miniature Provence, and by using such details, help to narrate a story by placing the product within its territory, its environment, or rather in an idealized surroundings. Such an entrepreneur, who is able to develop such a product, communicating a Mediterranean 'art de vivre', a style of well-being, and thereby selling a dream, is definitely an innovator and a creator. Is this just clever marketing or an authentically true culture? Whichever, consumers seem to appreciate these products, finding in them what they seek; another way of being and of consuming (Fig. 1-2).

II- 3 A theoretical debate: the product between history and representation

The role of representation is central to economic and social life in (post) modern society, as Johnston underlined (1997, p.307), whilst May (1996, p.57) spoke of an 'imaginative geography', and showed for instance the increasing consumption of exotic products, such as food and clothing. This involves representation of the places from where the products come and may lead to stereotyping. Of course, it is possible to question and deconstruct the discourse of authenticity, in the same way that the discourse of domestic appliances, which

were going to 'revolutionize' a woman's life, was examined in a critical manner. But, in the end, we can see that everything just comes down to business. We can therefore consider "natural" products (if they really are) as 'a niche market tailored to suit specific socio-economic groups' (Glennie and Thrift, 1992, p.424), and in this case we are talking about a middle to upper class group, which is well educated, is used to traveling and is sensitive to environmental issues.

Our worlds of consumption are thus socially constructed. Segments of society, such as those associated with the ecology movement, are committed to particular forms of consumption (Johnston, 1997, p.310). In short, it is possible that some 'new' cultural geographer may consider this story, and more generally, territorial resources as fiction, "a fabrication that depends in part upon the position of the interpreter" (Ley and Duncan, 1993, p.329). This concern with relativism does not preclude considering territories as new ways of creating productive resources. Neither does it disqualify the historical roots of a cultural product and its territorial anchoring. In the classical sense, culture can be described as the sum of attitudes, skills, techniques, knowledge and values that have been accumulated and transmitted from generation to generation within a territory, and our territory-product corresponds rather well to this definition.

III Towards a competitive cluster of perfumes, aromas, flavors and fragrances

This third section aims to highlight the shift from the 'revealed resource' towards the 'constructed resource', by studying a cluster that gradually formed over a period of twenty five years (1980-2005), not in Marseilles, but around the city of Manosque, in the Provence

countryside; a low mountainous area. Using this as an example will enable us to see the extent of its assets and limitations.

III-1- The role of fragrant, aromatic, and medicinal plants

The 70s marked the end of a secular depopulation process (Tirone, Ellerkamp, 2003, p.95) in the Alpes de Haute Provence area, and as the demographic trend reversed, towns and villages were slowly re-inhabited. In rural areas, numerous professional organizations became involved in various projects such as "The Road of Lavender" and promoting the famous local writer, Jean Giono (1895-1970). These projects were sometimes supported with EU financial subsidies.

Lavender has been recognised since Antiquity for its fragrance and its medicinal virtues. However, it cannot be regarded as an historical element of the Provençal landscape, which is traditionally composed of vineyards, wheat and olives trees. The cultivation of lavender was identified during the Middle Age and the Modern Era but was never really developed, and it is only since the early 20th century that it has become a symbol of the Provençal landscape (de Réparaz, 1978; Naviner, 2002). Today, around 15,000 hectares of fragrant, aromatic and medicinal plants are found within the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur region, and lavender, being the most important plant for cultivation, is found in the dry, middle mountain ranges. (Onippam, 2007). Among the different types of lavenders, 70% are lavendin (lavandula intermedia) growing to an altitude of 200-800 meters, and 30% true lavender (lavandula angustifolia) growing between an altitude of 800 and 1300 meters (Fig. 3-4). Whilst essential oil is used for perfumes, pharmaceutical products and cosmetics, only essential oil from true lavender can be labelled 'AOC lavender essential oil from Haute-Provence'. *L'Occitane en*

Provence, whose manufacturing plant and R & D departments are located in Manosque, generally buys half of the 'AOC' production of lavender essential oil (Fig. 5-6). Consequently, this agricultural production that provides a strong identity to the landscape, is directly linked to three main areas of activity located within the territory, namely: hand-crafts and industrial production, training and research, and tourism and heritage.

III-2- Network of actors and resources under construction

L'Occitane has evolved rapidly. The traditional company, founded in 1976, (the same year as *The Body Shop*) originally sold essential oils and soaps on Provençal markets, but when it was taken over in 1996 by Reinold Geiger, an Austrian businessman, it expanded at an incredible rate and became a globalized company. As Geiger stated: *"In 1996 there were only two stores in France. Today we have just under 900 stores around the world. Approximately 30% of our business is in Europe, 30% in the Americas and 40% in Asia"*[4]. The stores bearing the name *L'Occitane en Provence* now sell a wide variety of toiletries, cosmetics and perfumes.

In the wake of this pioneering company, other small and medium-sized enterprises have been set up in the specialist food, soap, cosmetics and perfume sectors, e.g. *Les Distilleries et Domaines de Provence, Terre d'Oc Créations, Les Laboratoires Bains et Arômes* (Peres, 2008). As a result, more than 70 business units (excluding farming) have become part of the Local Productive System (LPS) under the name of "Flavors and Fragrances of Haute Provence" (Fig. 7). Indeed, in 1998 new government regulations were launched to identify and support such business combinations. In 2002 the LPS, also supported by local authorities,

[4] Declared by Geiger in March 2007 for INSEAD
http://www.insead.edu/alumni/newsletter/March2007/ReinoldGeigerinterview.htm

decided to establish the "European University of Flavors and Fragrances" in order to provide professional training, animation and promotion of the sector. Its partners also include ONIPPAM, a national organization dedicated to fragrant aromatic and medicinal plants, COSMED, an association for cosmetics companies, and the University of Provence.

In 2005, this LPS, associated with the LPS "Aromas and Perfumes of Grasse" on the French Riviera (Fig. 8-9), formed the 'Competitive Cluster of Perfumes, Aromas, Flavors and Fragrances', as part as the French *"Pôles de compétitivité"* program. This new organization, by merging the two main 'clusters' of Haute Provence and Grasse into one group, numbering more than 10,000 jobs, was dedicated to new R&D projects, notably by working in conjunction with Nice and Aix-Marseille Universities.

III-3- Assets and limitations of the system

Development of these territorial resources has generated viable assets and ideas that fall into four categories: Firstly, a *terroir* with both a strong image and reputation can generate a significant business. Secondly, challenged by globalization, this sector has the advantage of relying on internal resources, of facing offshoring and bringing added value from its own territory. Thirdly, it meets the needs of the consumers looking for quality, authenticity and traceability. Fourthly, it stimulates the interactions between four closely associated areas, namely, agriculture, crafts and industry, research and training, as well as tourism and heritage.

However, four limitations of the system must be emphasized: Firstly, this fiercely competitive industry is faced by both the mass production of essential oils and companies or regions whose top quality products have a territorial base, such as *Caudalie*, a cosmetic company

located in the vineyards of Bordeaux. Secondly, with the merger of the Haute Provence and Grasse clusters, certain problems have been caused by the lack of co-operation. Thirdly, the success observed is that of a generation (the generation of Baussan for instance) and the continuity of a sustainable cluster should be considered in light of future developments. Fourthly, the Provençal region continues to be threatened by high urbanization which is the price of its attractiveness. It is therefore essential to ensure resource sustainability.

Conclusion

Thus, a strong relationship has emerged between an evolutionary and a territorial resource issue, both of which require taking history into account but via different paths. Each school focuses on its emblematic keywords such as 'path dependence', 'innovative milieu', 'cluster', 'territory'…, but both seem to share a common 'trading zone' by searching for a better representation of the complexity that surrounds these issues. Concerning the study of the territory as a complex system, Moine (2006) stated: *"The territory has been the subject of much attention over the past twenty years, because it is central to the representations we have of the complexity that surrounds us."* Also, Martin and Sunley (2007) argued for an understanding of the economic landscape as "a complex adaptive system".

More precisely, by taking history into account, I have identified three distinctive stages. The path from the 'given resource' buried in the past to the 'revealed resource' occurs under the pressure of contemporary issues (in this case, sustainable development) that takes inspiration from the past and creates a feedback loop. This stage involves individual actors setting an action in motion. The path from the 'revealed resource' to the 'constructed resource' is a collective work that requires the sharing of common interests and a common vision of the future within a milieu and a territory. Thus, the innovative process takes place within 'a

complex space-time' where, over time, retrospective and prospective visions are linked together, and within space, several local to global scales are similarly linked.

This case study approximates a model of evolution associated both with major external shocks (the ideological turn in consumption) and the creation of new paths, using the role of human agents. At the same time, it has also opened a new window. This journey inside 'space-time' – similar to an embeddedness of history within the present territory – shows us consequently that the relationship to the past is less a 'path dependence' phenomenon than a 'path of interaction', and in this case a source of renewal; in the same way that the Renaissance was projected in modernity by rediscovering its antique roots.

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Caption FIG 1 - 2: Consumption and Globalization of Provençal Symbols

Picture 1: Lavender sachets and soaps are typical products of Provence that tourists love to buy locally. They are presented here in a street of Aix-en-Provence.
Picture 2: L'Occitane en Provence has spread around the world a set of products that carry the picture of Provence. Here the store located in New York (Times Square).

483x260mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Caption Fig 3-4 Lavender and lavendin of Haute Provence

Pictures 3 and 4 were taken in the Alpes de Haute Provence during the lavender and lavendin harvest in late August 2009.

In picture 3, the plants shown are lavendula augustifolia, which have a 'controlled term of origin' (AOC) label in Provence. It is the best lavender to use for top quality essential oils and all AOC lavender production is used by L'Occitane.

Picture 4 represents lavendin (lavendula intermedia), a natural hybrid between lavendula augustifolia and lavendula latifolia. It is less frequently used in perfume manufacturing, but more so for house-cleaning products.

715x268mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Caption Fig 5-6 Distillation

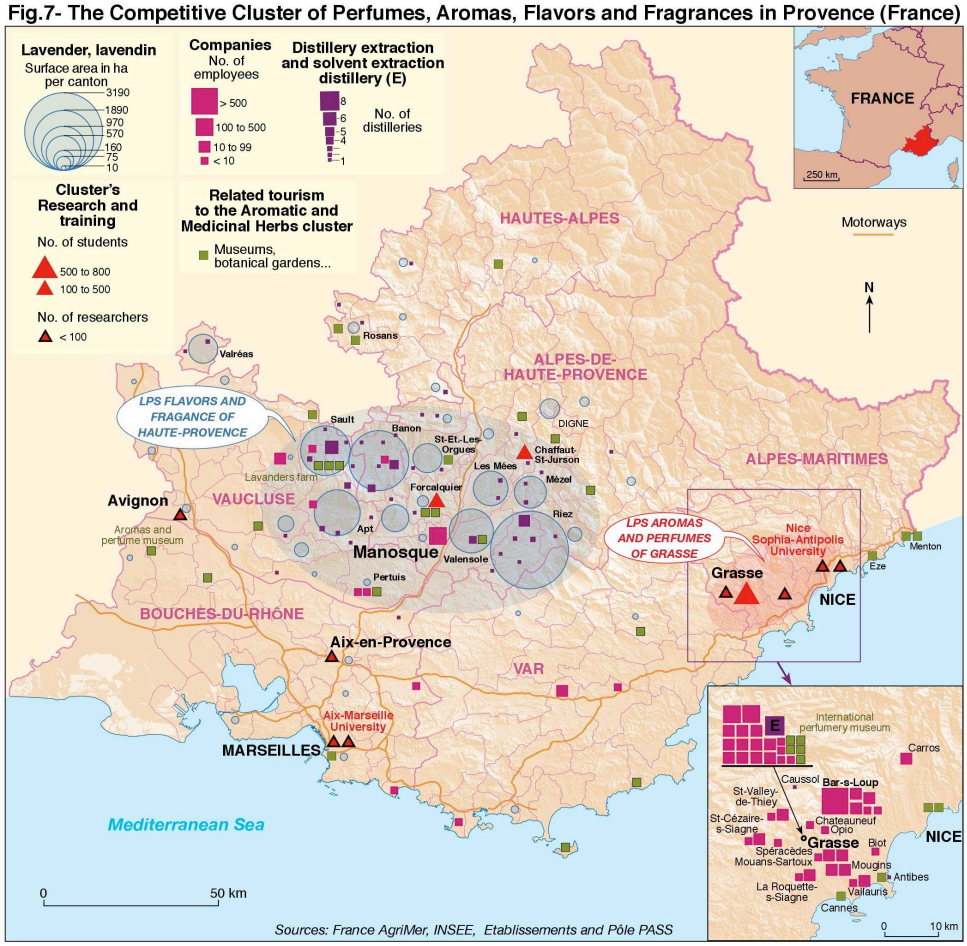
Pictures 5 and 6 show a distillation laboratory that is in many cases located close to the fields so that cut and fresh flowers can be distilled quickly.

On picture 5, raw plant material, consisting of the lavender leaves and branches is put into an alembic (distillation apparatus) over water. As the water is heated the steam passes through the plant material, vaporizing the volatile compounds.

On picture 6, the vapors flow through a coil where they condense back to liquid, which is then collected in the receiving vessel. Most oils are distilled in a single process.

700x268mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Fig.7- The Competitive Cluster of Perfumes, Aromas, Flavors and Fragrances in Provence (France)



183x181mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Caption Fig 8-9 Rose and Jasmine of Grasse

In local folklore, Grasse is nicknamed the "Worldwide capital city of perfumes". This city and its surrounding district provide the main production of Jasminum Grandiflorum (Picture 8) and Rosa Centifolia (Picture 9). Those flowers have an excellent reputation in fine fragrance manufacturing and are purchased by, for example, Chanel and Christian Dior, both of which have signed a deal with local growers. There are only 12 hectares in total where jasmine and rose are grown in the Maritime Alps.

2166x812mm (72 x 72 DPI)